

REMARKS

The Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated May 22, 2003. Claims 1 to 8 and 10 to 17 are in the applications, of which Claims 1 and 10 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Figure 2 was objected to for an informality, which is addressed by the accompanying Letter Transmitting Formal Drawing.

Claims 1 to 6, 8, 10 to 15 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent 6,468,884 (Miyake). Claims 7 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) also over Miyake. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

Initially, Applicants note that Miyake does not qualify as § 102(b) prior art, since it was not issued more than one year before the filing date of the subject application. However, since Miyake's application apparently was published on September 6, 2001, the rejection will be treated on the technological merits.

According to Claim 1, the present invention concerns an annealing method for annealing an SOI substrate in a reducing atmosphere. The method includes the steps of holding the SOI substrate by a holding portion having a surface formed from silicon, and annealing the SOI substrate. The holding portion is a member having a silicon film thereon or a member formed from single-crystal silicon or polysilicon.

The present invention, according to Claim 10, relates to an annealing method for annealing an SOI substrate in a reducing atmosphere. The method includes the steps of holding the SOI substrate by a holding portion which contains no silicon carbide formed by sintering and has a surface formed from silicon carbide deposited by CVD, and annealing the SOI substrate.

Miyake is not seen to teach or suggest the present invention. In particular, Miyake is unrelated to annealing an SOI substrate in a reducing atmosphere. Furthermore, Miyake is not seen to teach or suggest holding an SOI substrate by a holding portion which contains no silicon carbide formed by sintering and has a surface formed from silicon carbide deposited by CVD.

Rather, Miyake, relates to a method of forming a silicon-contained crystal thin film, wherein the method involves hydrogen ion implantation. Miyake's method includes implanting hydrogen ions into a silicon-contained crystal substrate then heating and cooling the substrate within a melted metal liquid. Consequently, Miyake, at the very least, is unrelated to annealing an SOI substrate in a reducing atmosphere and may be seen to teach away from annealing in a reducing atmosphere as recited in independent Claims 1 and 10. In addition, with reference to Claim 10, Miyake is not seen to teach holding an SOI substrate by a holding portion which contains no silicon carbide formed by sintering and has a surface formed from silicon carbide deposited by CVD.

In view of the foregoing, withdrawal of the rejections over independent Claims 1 and 10 and all claims which depend from them is respectfully requested.

THIRD REQUEST FOR INITIALLED FORM PTO-1449

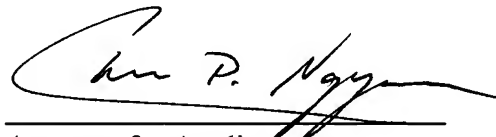
In regards to a formal matter, the Examiner is respectfully requested to indicate that the art cited in the Information Disclosure Statement dated May 14, 2002, has been considered and made formally of record by initialling and returning the Form PTO-1449 attached thereto. For the Examiner's convenience a copy of the Form PTO-1449 is attached.

THIRD REQUEST FOR ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF CLAIM TO PRIORITY

Applicant notes that the Office Action does not indicate that the Office has received the certified copy of the priority document. The priority document was submitted on August 15, 2002, as evidenced by the enclosed copy of the stamped postcard. The Examiner is urged to review the Patent Office file and confirm for herself that the priority documents have been received and indicate such receipt in the next communication.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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